

Message Text

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PAGE 01 OTTAWA 00140 152312Z

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SUBJECT: OTTAWA JOURNAL CRITICIZES CBC TV SPECIAL ON INTELLIGENCE
ACTIVITIES IN CANADA

REF: OTTAWA 0100

1. THE OTTAWA JOURNAL IN AN EDITORIAL ENTITLED "CLAK
AND DAGGER FANTASY" AND PUBLISHED JANUARY 14, CRITICIZED
THE RECENT CBC TV SPECIAL ON INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES
IN CANADA STATING THAT "THE CBC'S DISTORTION
OF A WORTH-
WHILE PROGRAM WITH TOO-FAMILIAR ANTI-AMERICAN BIAS
SUCCEEDED ONLY IN MAKING THE SORT OF HONEST TEAMWORK
OF 25 YEARS MORE DIFFICULT. THE CBC STILL NEEDS A GOOD
EDITOR."

2. FULL TEXT OF EDITORIAL FOLLOWS:

"THE CBC'S VERVE FOR INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING IS ITS
STRONGEST HOME-GROWN DISTINCTION. BUT WHEN THEATRICALS
BECOME A DEVICE TO COLOR SIMPLE FACTS WITH INNUENDO A
PUBLIC SERVICE BECOMES A DISSERVICE. SUCH WAS THE CASE
IN LAST WEEK'S TV SPECIAL ON US-CANADIAN INTELLIGENCE
UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 OTTAWA 00140 152312Z

ACTIVITIES.

"IT IS DISMAYING THAT MPS DIGNIFIED THE PROGRAM WITH QUESTIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT. PRECISELY BY SUCH NOTORIETY DO SOME CBC PRODUCERS MEASURE THE SUCCESS OF THEIR EFFORTS. MERE JOURNALISTIC RESPONSIBILITY IS SO DULL*

"THAT CANADA AND THE US ARE PARTY TO SEVERAL JOINT INFORMATION-SHARING AGREEMENTS-- AND THAT IS WHAT INTELLIGENCE IS ALL ABOUT-- IS, IN ITSELF, NO SECRET ANY MORE THAN ARE DEFENCE PRODUCTION-SHARING COMMITMENTS OR NORAD. THE IMPLICATION, BY TELEVISION TECHNIQUE, OF SINISTER GOINGS-ON WAS ACHIEVED DESPITE ALL THE EVIDENCE TO THE CONTRARY.

"IN THE TWO PRIMARY AREAS OF INTELLIGENCE WITH WHICH THE CBC PROGRAM WAS CONCERNED, MILITARY DEFENCE AND NATIONAL SECURITY IN THE CIVIL SENSE, THERE IS STRONG COMMON INTEREST BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. AMERICAN SPECIALISTS ARE ACCREDITED TO THEIR EMBASSY HERE AS ARE CANADIANS IN WASHINGTON, NOT AS SPIES BUT LEGITIMATE REPRESENTATIVES, WHICH SEEMS ANYTHING BUT UNDERHAND. THE SAME MIGHT BE SAID FOR THE BRITISH WITH WHOM CANADA HAS COMPARABLE ARRANGEMENTS, INCLUDING ONE-FOR-ONE OFFICER EXCHANGES IN MILITARY ESTABLISHMENTS.

"THERE IS A VAST DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "SPYING" AND BEING ALERT. THE MONITORING OF ATMOSPHERIC COMMUNICATIONS AS AN INTELLIGENCE FUNCTION FORMS AN ESSENTIAL PART OF THE INTELLIGENCE MOSAIC MORE PRODUCTIVE ON THE WHOLE THAN THE CLOAK-AND-DAGGER ACTIVITIES WHICH MIGHT PROPERLY BE CALLED SPYING.

"THE CONTRIBUTION OF NRC'S COMMUNICATIONS BRANCH IN THIS FIELD MAY WELL BE SIGNIFICANT BUT IT DOESN'T MAKE THE NRC A SATELLITE OF THE CIA. WHETHER OR NOT THE NRC IS THE RIGHT PLACE TO CONDUCT THAT SORT OF BUSINESS MAY BE SOMETHING ELSE. BUT THAT IS A THIN POINT TO BUILD A TV PROGRAM AROUND.

"INTELLIGENCE, WHETHER IN ECONOMICS, TECHNOLOGY,
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PAGE 03 OTTAWA 00140 152312Z

DEFENSE OR A DOZEN OTHER AREAS IS ESSENTIAL TO NATIONAL PLANNING. IT IS EXPENSIVE AND COMPLEX. TO SUGGEST THAT CANADA GO IT ALONE IS AS IMPRACTICABLE AS IT WOULD BE IMPRACTICAL FOR CANADA TO GROPE INTO THE FUTURE WITHOUT IT. COOPERATION, NOT ONLY WITH OUR AMERICAN NEIGHBORS BUT WITH ALL OUR ALLIES, IS WHAT MAKES THE LEVEL OF INTELLIGENCE WE NEED AFFORDABLE. WITHOUT IT WE WOULD INDEED RISK LOSING OUR ABILITY TO MAKE INDEPENDENT JUDG-

MENTS AND DECISIONS.

"CANADA HAS NO EQUIVALENT OF THE CIA, AND DOESN'T NEED ONE. ITS MISADVENTURES IN CUBA, CHILE, AFRICA AND THE ORIENT WERE IN A DIFFERENT LEAGUE THAN ANY IN WHICH WE HAVE AMBITIONS. TO CONFUSE THEM WITH THE COMMON INTEREST OF CANADA AND THE UNITED STATES REDUCES NEWS TO FANTASY.

"THE CBC'S DISTORTION OF A WORTHWHILE PROGRAM WITH TOO-FAMILIAR ANTI-AMERICAN BIAS SUCCEEDED ONLY IN MAKING THE SORT OF HONEST TEMPERAMENT OF 25 YEARS MORE DIFFICULT.

"THE CBC STILL NEEDS A GOOD EDITOR." END TEXT.
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